

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the:
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

To:

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PCT

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY
(PCT Rule 66)

		Date of mailing (day/month/year)	- 1 DEC 2004
Applicant's or agent's file reference FP19020-CLC		REPLY DUE	within TWO MONTHS from the above date of mailing
International application No. PCT/AU2004/000042	International filing date (day/month/year) 13 January 2004	Priority date (day/month/year) 24 January 2003	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC Int. CL. A63F 13/00, G07F 17/34			
Applicant UNITAB LIMITED et al			

1. The written opinion established by the International Searching Authority:
 is is not
 considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority.

2. This second (second, etc.) opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I	Basis of the opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	Priority
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV	Lack of unity of invention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V	Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Certain documents cited
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII	Certain defects in the international application
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII	Certain observations on the international application

3. The applicant is hereby invited to reply to this opinion.

When? See the Reply Due date indicated above. However, the Australian Patent Office will not establish the Report before the earlier of (i) a response being filed, or (ii) one month before the Final Date by which the international preliminary examination report must be established. The Report will take into account any response (including amendments) filed before the Report is established. If no response is filed by 1 month before the Final Date, the international preliminary examination report will be established on the basis of this opinion. Applicants wishing to have the benefit of a further opinion (if needed) before the report is established should ensure that a response is filed at least 3 months before the Final Date by which the international preliminary examination report must be established.

How? By submitting a written reply, accompanied, where appropriate, by amendments, according to Rule 66.3. For the form and the language of the amendments, see Rules 66.8 and 66.9.

Also For an additional opportunity to submit amendments, see Rule 66.4. For the examiner's obligation to consider amendments and/or arguments, see Rule 66.4bis. For an informal communication with the examiner, see Rule 66.6.

4. The FINAL DATE by which the international preliminary report on patentability (Chapter II of the PCT) must be established according to Rule 69.2 is: 24 May 2005

Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized Officer SUE THOMAS Telephone No. (02) 6283 2454
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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/AU2004/000042

Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 - This opinion is based on a translation from the original language into the following language which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
 - international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1 (b))
 - publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
 - international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)
2. With regard to the elements of the international application, this opinion has been established on the basis of (replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this opinion as "originally filed."):
 - the international application as originally filed/furnished
 - the description: pages , as originally filed/furnished pages , received by this Authority on with the letter of pages , received by this Authority on with the letter of
 - the claims: pages , as originally filed/furnished pages , as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19, pages , received by this Authority on with the letter of pages , received by this Authority on with the letter of
 - the drawings: pages , as originally filed/furnished pages , received by this Authority on with the letter of pages , received by this Authority on with the letter of
 - a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.
3. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
 - the description, pages
 - the claims, Nos.
 - the drawings, sheets/figs
 - the sequence listing (specify):
 - any table(s) related to the sequence listing (specify):
4. This opinion has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).
 - the description, pages
 - the claims, Nos.
 - the drawings, sheets/figs
 - the sequence listing (specify):
 - any table(s) related to the sequence listing (specify):

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/AU2004/000042

Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention

1. In response to the invitation (Form PCT/IPEA/405) to restrict or pay additional fees the applicant has:

- restricted the claims
- paid additional fees
- paid additional fees under protest
- neither restricted nor paid additional fees

2. This Authority found that the requirement of unity of invention is not complied with for the following reasons and chose, according to Rule 68.1, not to invite the applicant to restrict or pay additional fees:

The international application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention because it does not relate to one invention or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept. In coming to this conclusion the International Preliminary Examining Authority has found that there are different inventions of independent claims as follows:

1. Claim 1 relates to awarding a prize in a gaming system including a plurality of game consoles comprising the steps of providing a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, periodically receiving count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize. It is considered that the random variable having a non-uniform distribution comprises a first "special technical feature".
2. Claim 87 relates to a gaming system comprising at least one game console, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of each game console, store count data for each game console in a different memory location, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by a receiver for each game console and compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to the gaming console which has a total value having a predetermined relationship with the trigger value. It is considered that storing count data for each game console in a different memory location so as to compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value comprises a second "special technical feature".

3. Consequently, this opinion has been established in respect of the following parts of the international application:

- all parts
- the parts relating to claims Nos.

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

International Application No.

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Supplemental Box

In case the space in any of the preceding boxes is not sufficient.

Continuation of: Box IV

These groups are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept, that is, they do not have any common inventive features, which define a contribution over the prior art. The common concept linking together these groups of claims is awarding a prize in a gaming system of at least one console by generating a trigger value, receiving count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, and outputting a prize signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value. However this concept is not novel in the light of AU 200234395 A1 (DAUMA PTY LTD), AU 13023/92 (655801) A (FRANKOVIC) and AU 53370/86 (589158) B (FRANKOVIC et al). Therefore these claims lack unity a posteriori. It is also noted no "special technical feature" appears to exist between independent claims 27, 41, or 79 when compared with the prior art as discussed in Box V.

The International Preliminary Examining Authority believes that an examination for the second invention will not involve more than a little additional effort over that for the first invention and so no additional fee is required in order to examine that invention.

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/AU2004/000042

Box No. V **Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims 1-26, 29, 34-36, 42, 43, 45-47, 54-60, 72-76, 80-83, 87-95	YES
	Claims 27, 28, 30-33, 37, 39-41, 44, 48-53, 61-71, 77-79, 84-86, 96-101	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims 1-26, 34-36, 42, 45-47, 54-60, 72, 73, 75, 76, 83, 87-95	YES
	Claims 27-33, 37, 39-41, 43, 44, 48-53, 61-71, 74, 77-82, 84-86, 96-101	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims 1-37, 39-101	YES
	Claims	NO

2. Citations and explanations:

D1. AU 200234395

D2. AU 13023/92

D3. AU 53370/86

NOVELTY (N) Claims 27, 28, 30-33, 37, 39-41, 44, 48-53, 61-71, 77-79, 84-86, 96-101

Claims 27, 32, 41, 79

Each of the above citations explicitly disclose the features of the above claim. For example, in D1 see:

- generating a trigger value page 3, line 31
- receiving count data page 4, line 3
- calculating a total value page 4, line 4
- comparing total value with trigger value page 4, lines 4-6
- outputting a prize instruction signal page 4, lines 4-6

Therefore the subject matter of these claims is not new and does not meet the requirements of Article 33(2) PCT with regard to novelty.

Claims 28, 30, 31, 33, 37, 39, 40, 44, 48-53, 61-71, 77, 78, 84-86, 96-101

The features added by the appended claims are also identifiable in the citations.

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

International Application No.

PCT/AU2004/000042

Supplemental Box

In case the space in any of the preceding boxes is not sufficient.

Continuation of: Box V

INVENTIVE STEP (IS) Claims 27-33, 37-41, 43, 44, 48-53, 61-71, 74, 77-82, 84-86, 96-101

Claims 27, 28, 30-33, 37, 39-41, 44, 48-53, 61-71, 77-79, 84-86, 96-101

As previously discussed.

Claims 29, 80-82

The feature of calculating an offset value and adding this to a random variable to produce a trigger value appears to be no more than a workshop improvement that any competent worker in the art would be expected to make directly and without difficulty and by routine steps alone. Therefore the subject matter of these claims is obvious and does not meet the requirements of Article 33(3) PCT with regard to inventive step.

Claim 43

The feature of transmitting a prize instruction signal independent of count data received during an elapsed period appears to be no more than a workshop improvement that any competent worker in the art would be expected to make directly and without difficulty and by routine steps alone. Therefore the subject matter of these claims is obvious and does not meet the requirements of Article 33(3) PCT with regard to inventive step.

Claim 74

The feature of resetting the trigger value more frequently than once per output of the prize instruction signal appears to be no more than a workshop improvement that any competent worker in the art would be expected to make directly and without difficulty and by routine steps alone. Therefore the subject matter of these claims is obvious and does not meet the requirements of Article 33(3) PCT with regard to inventive step.

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
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International application No.

PCT/AU2004/000042

Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

The claims do not comply with Rule 6.1(b) because they are not numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals (ie claim 38 is not present within the claims).

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/AU2004/000042

Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

Claims 32 and 87 are not clear because I cannot find an antecedent to "the receiver" within the claim.

Claims 91 and 94 are not clear because it is not apparent whether "the trigger value" and "the random value" is intended to be the same as, or different from, each other. Therefore, the scope of the monopoly is not clearly defined. It is noted that in patent claims, different words are taken to be defining different things, however the context suggests that a single thing may be being referred to.

AMENDED SET OF CLAIMS

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CLAIMS

1. A method of awarding a prize in a gaming system including a plurality of game consoles comprising the steps of providing a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, periodically receiving count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize.
- 15 2. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.
3. The method as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the prize instruction signal is output from the output means to at least one game console.
- 20 4. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the prize instruction signal includes a prize display signal and a game console signal for updating one or more of the game consoles.
5. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein 25 the output means is connected to a display means which indicates that a prize has been won by the at least one game console.
6. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset 30 value to produce the trigger value.
7. The method as claimed in claim 6 wherein the offset value is calculated and stored in a memory location prior to addition to the random variable.
8. The method as claimed in claim 7 wherein 35 the random variable has a distribution which is modified by a function to generate a value with a geometric distribution.

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9. The method as claimed in claim 8 wherein the function includes an inverse geometric distribution.

10. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the prize is determined independently of the count data.

5 11. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the prize instruction signal is output to the gaming console from which count data was received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

10 12. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein count data is collected synchronously with game play on each gaming console.

15 13. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein count data is collected asynchronously with game play on at least one gaming console.

14. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the predetermined relationship is that the total value is equal to or greater than the trigger value.

20 15. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the predetermined relationship is that the total value is related to the trigger value through a mathematical relationship.

25 16. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the count data represents one game played on one game console.

17. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the count data includes any one or more of the following parameters:

30 a predetermined amount of money spent on a gaming console, a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console, a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles, each time a gaming console is played, a predetermined turnover of gaming consoles, a predetermined function of turnover, one event occurring on 35 one or more game consoles.

18. The method as claimed in claim 1 including a loyalty system including transaction terminals whereby

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every time a customer makes a transaction count data is transmitted to a central console whereby a person has a chance of winning a jackpot.

19. The method as claimed in claim 1 including
5 a controller, a trigger value generator, a jackpot
triggering means and a display means separate from each
gaming console.

20. The method as claimed in claim 19 wherein
the system includes a storage means for storing count
10 data.

21. The method as claimed in claim 20 including
the step of providing an accumulator for totalling the
count data stored in the storage means.

22. The method as claimed in claim 21 wherein
15 the controller provides the random trigger value.

23. The method as claimed in claim 1 including
the step of providing a new random trigger value at a
predetermined time interval.

24. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a
20 new random trigger value is provided after at least one
game controller issues a prize.

25. The method as claimed in claim 1 including
the step of calculating a random value having one
probability distribution and transforming the random value
25 by a predetermined function to generate a random value
with a different probability distribution.

26. A controller for use in a gaming system,
the controller comprising a trigger value derived from a
random variable having a non-uniform distribution, a
30 generator for generating a random trigger value at
predetermined times, a receiver for receiving count data
from each game console, being data representing at least
one parameter of a game console, a calculating means for
calculating a total value representing the total count
35 data received by the receiver, a comparator for comparing
the total value with the trigger value and a processor for
outputting a prize signal to at least one game console if

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the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

27. The controller as claimed in claim 26 wherein the processor is adapted to output a prize signal 5 to the game console from which count data was received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with a trigger value.

28. The controller as claimed in claim 26 wherein the trigger value generator is adapted to 10 periodically select a value of the random variable, calculate an offset value and add this to the random variable to produce the trigger value.

29. The controller as claimed in claim 28 wherein the trigger value is determined independently of 15 turnover of the gaming system.

30. The controller as claimed in claim 29 wherein the random variable has a minimum value of 1.

31. A gaming system comprising a plurality of game consoles, a trigger value generator for generating a 20 trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculate a total 25 value representing the total count data received by the controller and compare the total value with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the 30 trigger value.

32. The gaming system as claimed in claim 31 wherein the controller is adapted to operate the prize trigger means to transmit the prize instruction signal to one of the game consoles from which count data was 35 received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

33. The gaming system as claimed in claim 32

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wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.

34. The method as claimed in claim 33 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset 5 value to produce the trigger value.

35. A method of awarding a prize in a gaming system including at least one game console comprising the steps of providing a random trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, 10 periodically receiving count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of the game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, transmitting a prize instruction signal to 15 an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize.

36. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein 20 the prize instruction signal is transmitted independent of count data received during an elapsed period.

37. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the system includes a plurality of game consoles.

38. The method as claimed in claim 37 including 25 an accumulator means for accumulating count data separately for each game console.

39. The method as claimed in claim 38 including a totaliser means for calculating a total value representing the total count data stored in the 30 accumulator for each game console.

40. The method as claimed in claim 39 wherein each total value calculated by the totalizer is compared with the trigger value and a prize instruction signal is transmitted to the output means if any one or more of the 35 total values has a predetermined relationship with a trigger value.

41. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein

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the predetermined relationship with a trigger value includes any one or more of:

the total value is equal to the trigger value;
the total value is greater than the trigger

5 value;

the total value is a multiple of the trigger value;

the total value is related to the trigger value through a mathematical relationship.

10 42. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the count data is indicative of the amount wagered on one game console.

15 43. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein count data is received from the at least one game console each time an amount is wagered on the at least one game console.

44. The method as claimed in claim 43 wherein the total value is recalculated each time count data is received from the at least one game console.

20 45. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the output means is connected to a display means which indicates that a prize has been won by the at least one game console.

25 46. The method as claimed in claim 45 wherein the display means includes a visual display separate from the at least one game console.

30 47. The method as claimed in claim 35 including the step of providing a plurality of random trigger values with each trigger value being associated with a respective gaming console.

48. The method as claimed in claim 36 wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.

35 49. The method as claimed in claim 37 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset value to produce the random trigger value.

50. The method as claimed in claim 49 wherein the offset value is calculated and stored in a memory

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location prior to addition to the random variable.

51. The method as claimed in claim 36 wherein the random variable has a distribution which is modified by a function to generate a value with a geometric distribution.

52. The method as claimed in claim 51 wherein the function includes an inverse geometric distribution.

53. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the value of the prize is determined independently of the 10 count data.

54. The method as claimed in claim 53 wherein the value of the prize is determined independently of turnover occurring within a predetermined period of time.

55. The method as claimed in claim 53 wherein 15 the count data is collected synchronously with game play on the or each game console.

56. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the comparing step is performed synchronously with playing the gaming console.

57. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein 20 the comparing step is performed asynchronously with playing the gaming console.

58. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein 25 the comparing step is performed synchronously with receiving count data.

59. The method as claimed in claim 36 wherein the comparing step is performed asynchronously with receiving count data.

60. The method as claimed in claim 37 wherein 30 the count data represents any one of the following: one game played on one game console, multiple games played on one game console, one event occurring on one game console.

61. The method as claimed in claim 37 wherein 35 the count data includes any one of the following: a predetermined amount wagered on a gaming console;

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a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console;

a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles;

5 a predetermined turnover of one or more gaming consoles;

a predetermined function of turnover.

62. The method as claimed in claim 35 including the step of providing a new random trigger value at a 10 predetermined time.

63. The method as claimed in claim 62 wherein the new random trigger value is provided for one game console after a prize is issued to that game console.

15 64. The method as claimed in claim 35 including calculating a random value having one probability distribution and transforming the random value by a predetermined function to generate a random value with a different probability distribution.

20 65. The method as claimed in claim 64 wherein the random value is generated by a pseudo random number generator.

66. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the trigger value is reset more frequently than once per 25 output of the prize instruction signal.

67. The method as claimed in claim 49 wherein the offset value is set to the current total value.

30 68. The method as claimed in claim 67 wherein the offset value and the random value are selected and a trigger value reset whenever a prize instruction signal is sent to the game console.

69. The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the count data is reset to a predetermined number after a prize instruction signal is output.

35 70. The method as claimed in claim 69 wherein the random value is recalculated after the prize instruction signal is output whereby the trigger value is greater than or equal to the total value.

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71. A controller for use in a gaming system, the controller including a trigger value derived from a random variable having non-uniform distribution, a generator for generating a random trigger value at 5 predetermined times, a receiver for receiving count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of the game console, a calculating means for calculating a total value representing the total count data received by the receiver, a comparator for comparing 10 the total value with the trigger value and a processor for outputting a prize signal to the one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

72. The controller as claimed in claim 71 15 wherein the generator is adapted to select a value for the random variable, calculate an offset value and add this to the random value to produce the random trigger value.

73. The controller as claimed in claim 72 20 wherein the trigger value is determined independent of turnover of the gaming system.

74. The controller as claimed in claim 73 25 wherein the random variable value has a minimum value of one.

75. The controller as claimed in claim 72 30 wherein the receiver is adapted to receive count data from a plurality of game consoles and store the count data in separate memory locations associated with each game console and the calculating means includes an accumulator for calculating a total value for each game console and the comparator is adapted to compare the total value for 35 each game console with the trigger value.

76. The controller as claimed in claim 71 wherein a prize signal is output from the processor to the one game console if the total value is equal to or greater than the trigger value.

77. The controller as claimed in claim 72 35 wherein the count data includes any one of the group of:

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a predetermined amount wagered on a gaming console;

a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console;

5 a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles;

a predetermined turnover of one or more gaming consoles;

a predetermined function of turnover.

10 78. The controller as claimed in claim 72 which is configured to be located remotely from the or each game console.

15 79. A gaming system comprising at least one game console, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of each game console, store count data for each game console in a different memory location, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by the controller for each game console and compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to the gaming console which has a total value having a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

20 80. The gaming system as claimed in claim 79 wherein the trigger value generator comprises a plurality of trigger values each associated with a respective one of the game consoles.

25 81. The gaming system as claimed in claim 80 wherein the trigger value is determined independently of count data received over a predetermined period of time.

30 82. The gaming system as claimed in claim 80 wherein the trigger value is derived from a random variable which is added to an offset value.

35 83. The gaming system as claimed in claim 82

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wherein the trigger value is calculated based on a parameter indicative of the probability of a win.

84. The gaming system as claimed in claim 83 wherein the trigger value is selected independently of an 5 amount wagered on the or each gaming console over an elapsed period.

85. The method as claimed in claim 84 wherein the controller is located externally from the at least one game console.

86. The gaming system as claimed in claim 85 10 wherein the trigger value generator generates a value with one probability distribution and transforms the value by a predetermined function to generate a value with a different probability distribution.

87. The gaming system as claimed in claim 81 15 wherein the prize triggering means includes a prize setting means which is adapted to set the value of the prize awarded to the game console receiving the prize instruction signal based on a fixed value determined 20 before count data is received from the or each game console.

ARTICLE 34 AMENDMENTS PCT/AU2003/01054UNITAB LIMITED

Pages 10 and 11

Replace pages 10 and 11 with new pages 10, 11 and 11a. The amendments are detailed below with added text underlined and deleted text placed within [] for ease of reference.

Preferably the predetermined relationship may be one of the options previously defined.

Preferably the trigger value generator is adapted to periodically select a value of a random variable, calculate an offset value and add this to the random variable to produce the trigger value.

Preferably the trigger value is determined independent of turnover of the gaming system.

Preferably the random variable has a minimum value of 1.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided [a gaming system comprising a plurality of game consoles, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by the receiver and compare the total value with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value] a gaming system comprising a plurality of game consoles, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by the [receiver] controller and compare the total value with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

Preferably the controller is adapted to operate the prize trigger means to transmit the prize instruction signal to one of the game consoles from which count data was received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

It is preferred that the gaming system includes one or more means for implementing one or more of the methods previously outlined.

According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided [a method of awarding a prize in a gaming system including at least one game console comprising the steps of providing a random trigger value, periodically receiving count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of the game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize] a method of awarding a prize in a gaming system including at least one game

onsole comprising the steps of providing a random trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, periodically receiving count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of the game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize.

Claim Pages 35 to 44

Replace pages 35 to 44 with new pages 35 to 44. The amendments are detailed below with added text underlined and deleted text placed within [] for ease of reference.

18. The method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims including a loyalty system including transaction terminals whereby every time a customer makes a transaction count data is transmitted to a central console whereby a person has a chance of winning a jackpot.

19. The method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims including a controller, a trigger value generator, a jackpot triggering means and a display means separate from each gaming console.

20. The method as claimed in claim 19 wherein the system includes a storage means for storing count data.

21. The method as claimed in claim 20 including the step of providing an accumulator for totaling the count data stored in the storage means.

22. The method as claimed in claim 21 wherein the controller provides the random trigger value.

23. The method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims including the step of providing a new random trigger value at a predetermined time interval.

24. The method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 22, wherein a new random trigger value is provided after at least one game controller issues a prize.

25. The method as claimed in claim 1 including the step of calculating a random value having one probability distribution and transforming the random value by a predetermined function to generate a random value with a different probability distribution.

[26. The method as claimed in claim 6 wherein the offset value is set at the current total value.]

[27.] 26. A controller for use in a gaming system, the controller comprising a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, a generator for generating a random trigger value at predetermined times, a receiver for receiving count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, a calculating means for calculating a total value representing the total count data received by the receiver, a comparator for comparing the total value with the trigger value and a processor for outputting a prize signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

[28.] 27 The controller as claimed in claim [27] 26 wherein the processor is adapted to output a prize signal to the game console from which count data was

ceived which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with a trigger value.

[29.]28The controller as claimed in claim [27] 26 wherein the trigger value generator is adapted to periodically select a value of [a] the random variable, calculate an offset value and add this to the random variable to produce the trigger value.

[30.]29The controller as claimed in any one of claims [27 to 29] 26 to 28 wherein the trigger value is determined independently of turnover of the gaming system.

[31.]30The controller as claimed in any one of claims [27 to 30] 26 to 29 wherein the random variable has a minimum value of 1.

[32.]31A gaming system comprising a plurality of game consoles, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by the [receiver] controller and compare the total value with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

[33.]32The gaming system as claimed in claim [32]31 wherein the controller is adapted to operate the prize trigger means to transmit the prize instruction signal to one of the game consoles from which count data was received which resulted in the total value having the predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

[34.] The gaming system as claimed in claim 32 or 33 wherein the trigger value is derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution.]

[35.]33The gaming system as claimed in claim [34]32 wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.

[36.]34The method as claimed in claim [35]33 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset value to produce the trigger value.

[37.]35A gaming system substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one of Figures 1, 2 or [3] 6 of the accompanying drawings.

[39.]36A method of awarding a prize in a gaming system substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one of Figures 1, 2 or [3] 6 of the accompanying drawings.

[40.]37A controller for use in a gaming system substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one of Figures 1, 2 or [3] 6 of the accompanying drawings.

[41.]38A method of awarding a prize in a gaming system including at least one game console comprising the steps of providing a random trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, periodically receiving count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of the game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize.

[42.] The method of awarding a prize as claimed in claim 41 wherein the random trigger value is derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution.]

[43.]39 The method as claimed in claim [41 or 42] 37 or 38 wherein the prize instruction signal is transmitted independent of count data received during an elapsed period.

[44.]40 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 43] 38 to 39 wherein the system includes a plurality of game consoles.

[45.]41 The method as claimed in claim [44] 40 including an accumulator means for accumulating count data separately for each game console.

[46.]42 The method as claimed in claim [45] 41 including a totaliser means for calculating a total value representing the total count data stored in the accumulator for each game console.

[47.]43 The method as claimed in claim [46] 42 wherein each total value calculated by the totalizer is compared with the trigger value and a prize instruction signal is transmitted to the output means if any one or more of the total values has a predetermined relationship with a trigger value.

[48.]44 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 47] 38 to 43 wherein the predetermined relationship with a trigger value includes any one or more of:

- the total value is equal to the trigger value;
- the total value is greater than the trigger value;
- the total value is a multiple of the trigger value;
- the total value is related to the trigger value through a mathematical relationship.

[49.]45 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 48] 38 to 44 wherein the count data is indicative of the amount wagered on one game console.

[50.]46 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 49] 38 to 45 wherein count data is received from the at least one game console each time an amount is wagered on the at least one game console.

[51.]47 The method as claimed in claim [50] 46 wherein the total value is recalculated each time count data is received from the at least one game console.

[52.]48 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 50] 38 to 46 wherein the output means is connected to a display means which indicates that a prize has been won by the at least one game console.

[53.]49 The method as claimed in claim [52] 48 wherein the display means includes a visual display separate from the at least one game console.

[54.]50 The method as claimed in any one of claims 43 to 53 when not dependant on claim 42 wherein the random trigger value is derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution.]

[55.]50 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 54] 38 to 49 including the step of providing a plurality of random trigger values with each trigger value being associated with a respective gaming console.

[56.]51 The method as claimed in claim [42 or 54] 39 or 49 wherein the non-uniform distribution is a geometric distribution.

[57.]52 The method as claimed in claim [43] 40 when appended to claim [42] 39 wherein the random variable is added to a predetermined offset value to produce the random trigger value.

[58.]53 The method as claimed in claim [57] 52 wherein the offset value is calculated and stored in a memory location prior to addition to the random variable.

[59.] 54 The method as claimed in claim [43 or 58] 39 or 53 wherein the random variable has a distribution which is modified by a function to generate a value with a geometric distribution.

[60.] 55 The method as claimed in claim [59] 54 wherein the function includes an inverse geometric distribution.

[61.] 56 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 59] 38 to 54 wherein the value of the prize is determined independently of the count data.

[62.] 57 The method as claimed in claim [61] 56 wherein the value of the prize is determined independently of turnover occurring within a predetermined period of time.

[63.] 58 The method as claimed in claim [61] 56 wherein the count data is collected synchronously with game play on the or each game console.

[64.] 59 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 63] 38 to 58 wherein the comparing step is performed synchronously with playing the gaming console.

[65.] 60 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 63] 38 to 58 wherein the comparing step is performed asynchronously with playing the gaming console.

[66.] 61 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 63] 38 to 58 wherein the comparing step is performed synchronously with receiving count data.

[67.] 62 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 63] 39 to 58 wherein the comparing step is performed asynchronously with receiving count data.

[68.] 63 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 67] 40 to 62 wherein the count data represents any one of the following:

one game played on one game console, multiple games played on one game console, one event occurring on one game console.

[69.] 64 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 67] 40 to 62 wherein the count data includes any one of the following:

- a predetermined amount wagered on a gaming console;
- a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console;
- a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles;
- a predetermined turnover of one or more gaming consoles;
- a predetermined function of turnover.

[70.] 65 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 69] 38 to 64 including the step of providing a new random trigger value at a predetermined time.

[71.] 66 The method as claimed in claim [70] 65 wherein the new random trigger value is provided for one game console after a prize is issued to that game console.

[72.] 67 The method as claimed in claim [42 or 55] 38 or 50 including calculating a random value having one probability distribution and transforming the random value by a predetermined function to generate a random value with a different probability distribution.

[73.] 68 The method as claimed in claim [72] 67 wherein the random value is generated by a pseudo random number generator.

[74.] 69 The method as claimed in any one claims [41 to 73] 38 to 68 wherein the trigger value is reset more frequently than once per output of the prize instruction signal.

[75.] 70 The method as claimed in claim [57] 52 wherein the offset value is set to the current total value.

[76.] 71 The method as claimed in claim [75] 70 wherein the offset value and the random value are selected and a trigger value reset whenever a prize instruction signal is sent to the game console.

[77.] 72 The method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 76] 38 to 71 wherein the count data is reset to a predetermined number after a prize instruction signal is output.

[78.] 73 The method as claimed in claim [77] 72 wherein the random value is recalculated after the prize instruction signal is output whereby the trigger value is greater than or equal to the total value.

[79.] 74 A controller for use in a gaming system, the controller including a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, a generator for generating a random trigger value at predetermined times, a receiver for receiving count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of the game console, a calculating means for calculating a total value representing the total count data received by the receiver, a comparator for comparing the total value with the trigger value and a processor for outputting a prize signal to the one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

[80.] 75 The controller as claimed in claim [79] 74 wherein the generator is adapted to select a value [of a] for the random variable, calculate an offset value and add this to the random value to produce the random trigger value.

[81.] 76 The controller as claimed in claim [80] 75 wherein the trigger value is determined independent of turnover of the gaming system.

[82.] 77 The controller as claimed in claim [81] 76 wherein the random value has a minimum value of one.

[83.] 78 The controller as claimed in any one of claims [80 to 82] 75 to 77 wherein the receiver is adapted to receive count data from a plurality of game consoles and store the count data in separate memory locations associated with each game console and the calculating means includes an accumulator for calculating a total value for each game console and the comparator is adapted to compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value.

[84.] 79 The controller as claimed in any one of claims [79 to 82] 74 to 77 wherein a prize signal is output from the processor to the one game console if the total value is equal to or greater than the trigger value.

[85.] 80 The controller as claimed in any one of claims [80 to 84] 75 to 79 wherein the count data includes any one of the group of:
a predetermined amount wagered on a gaming console;
a predetermined number of indicia arrangements on a gaming console;
a predetermined combination of events on different gaming consoles;
a predetermined turnover of one or more gaming consoles;
a predetermined function of turnover.

[86.] 81 The controller as claimed in any one of claims [80 to 85] 75 to 80 which is configured to be located remotely from the [each] game console.

[87.] 82 A gaming system comprising at least one game console, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of each game console, store count data for each game console in a different memory location, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by the [receiver] controller for each game console and compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value and

operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to the gaming console which has a total value having a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

[88.] 83 The gaming system as claimed in claim [87] 82 wherein the trigger value generator comprises a plurality of trigger values each associated with a respective one of the game consoles.

[89.] 84 The gaming system as claimed in claim 88 wherein the trigger value is determined independently of count data received over a predetermined period of time.

[90.] 85 The gaming system as claimed in claim [88 or 89] 83 or 84 wherein the trigger value is derived from a random variable which is added to an offset value.

[91.] 86 The gaming system as claimed in claim [90] wherein the random value is calculated based on a parameter indicative of the probability of a win.

[92.] 87 The gaming system as claimed in claim [91] 86 wherein the trigger value is selected independently of an amount wagered on the or each gaming console over an elapsed period.

[93.] 88 The method as claimed in claim [92] 87 wherein the controller is located externally from the at least one game console.

[94.] 89 The gaming system as claimed in claim [93] 88 wherein the trigger value generator generates [the random] a value with one probability distribution and transforms the [random] value by a predetermined function to generate a [random] value with a different probability distribution.

[95.] 90 The gaming system as claimed in any one of claims [89 to 94] 84 to 89 wherein the prize triggering means includes a prize setting means which is adapted to set the value of the prize awarded to the game console receiving the prize instruction signal based on a fixed value determined before count data is received from the or each game console.

[96.] 91 A computer program which is configured to perform the method as claimed in any one of claims [41 to 78] 38 to 73.

[97.] 92 A computer storage medium which is adapted to store the computer program as claimed in claim in claim [96] 91.

[98.] 93 A method substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one of Figures [4 to 6] 3, 4 and 5 of the accompanying drawings.

[99.] 94 A controller substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one of Figures [4 to 6] 3, 4 and 5 of the accompanying drawings.

[100.] 95 A gaming system substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one of Figures [4 to 6] 3, 4 and 5 of the accompanying drawings.

[101.] 96 A computer program configured to operate a gaming system substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one of Figures [4 to 6] 3, 4 and 5 of the accompanying drawings.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY
PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference CLC:SB:FP19020	FOR FURTHER ACTION	
		See Form PCT/IPEA/416
International application No. PCT/AU2004/000042	International filing date (day/month/year) 13 January 2004	Priority date (day/month/year) 24 January 2003
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC Int. Cl. 7 A63F 13/00, G07F 17/34		
Applicant UNITAB LIMITED et al		

1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.	
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.	
3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:	
a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau) a total of 15 sheets, as follows:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).	
<input type="checkbox"/> sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.	
b. <input type="checkbox"/> (sent to the International Bureau only) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) , containing a sequence listing and/or table related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).	
4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I Basis of the report	
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II Priority	
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement	
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI Certain documents cited	
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application	
<input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application	

Date of submission of the demand 23 July 2004	Date of completion of the report 29 April 2005
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized Officer AMOD PRADHAN Telephone No. (02) 6283 2510

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/AU2004/000042

Box No.	Basis of the report
1.	<p>With regard to the language, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1 (b)) <input type="checkbox"/> publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4) <input type="checkbox"/> international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)
2.	<p>With regard to the elements of the international application, this report is based on (replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> the international application as originally filed/furnished</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the description: pages 1-9, 12-32 as originally filed/furnished pages* 10-11a received by this Authority on 2 March 2005 with the letter of 2 March 2005 pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the claims: pages as originally filed/furnished pages* as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19 pages* 33-44 received by this Authority on 2 March 2005 with the letter of 2 March 2005 pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the drawings: pages 1-6 as originally filed/furnished pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of pages* received by this Authority on with the letter of</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.</p>
3.	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> the description, pages <input type="checkbox"/> the claims, Nos. <input type="checkbox"/> the drawings, sheets/figs <input type="checkbox"/> the sequence listing (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> any table(s) related to the sequence listing (specify):</p>
4.	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> the description, pages <input type="checkbox"/> the claims, Nos. <input type="checkbox"/> the drawings, sheets/figs <input type="checkbox"/> the sequence listing (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> any table(s) related to the sequence listing (specify):</p>
<p>* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded."</p>	

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No. PCT/AU2004/000042
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Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention

1. In response to the invitation to restrict or pay additional fees the applicant has:
 - restricted the claims.
 - paid additional fees.
 - paid additional fees under protest.
 - neither restricted nor paid additional fees.
2. This Authority found that the requirement of unity of invention is not complied with and chose, according to Rule 68.1, not to invite the applicant to restrict or pay additional fees.
3. This Authority considers that the requirement of unity of invention in accordance with Rules 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3 is:
 - complied with.
 - not complied with for the following reasons:
 1. Claims 1-81, and 91-96 relate to a method and device for awarding a prize in a gaming system including a plurality of game consoles comprising a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, periodically receiving count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, and transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize. It is considered that the random variable having a non-uniform distribution comprises a first "special technical feature".
 2. Claims 82-90 relate to a gaming system comprising at least one game console, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of each game console, store count data for each game console in a different memory location, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by a receiver for each game console and compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to the gaming console which has a total value having a predetermined relationship with the trigger value. It is considered that storing count data for each game console in a different memory location so as to compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value comprises a second "special technical feature".

Continued on extra sheet.

4. Consequently, this report has been established in respect of the following parts of the international application:

- all parts.
- the parts relating to claims Nos.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No. PCT/AU2004/000042
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Supplemental Box

In case the space in any of the preceding boxes is not sufficient,

Continuation of: Box No. IV

These groups are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept, that is, they do not have any common inventive features, which define a contribution over the prior art. The common concept linking together these groups of claims is awarding a prize in a gaming system of at least one console by generating a trigger value, receiving count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, and outputting a prize signal to at least one game console if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value. However this concept is not novel in the light of AU 200234395 A1 (DAUMA PTY LTD), AU 13023/92 (655801) A (FRANKOVIC) and AU 53370/86 (589158) B (FRANKOVIC et al). Therefore these claims lack unity a posteriori.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/AU2004/000042

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims 1-96	YES
	Claims	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims 1-96	YES
	Claims	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims 1-96	YES
	Claims	NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

Claims 1-81, 91-96

The invention of the amended claims is directed to a method and device for awarding a prize in a gaming system including a plurality of game consoles comprising a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution, periodically receiving count data from each game console, being data representing at least one parameter of a game console, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, and transmitting a prize instruction signal to an output means if the total value has a predetermined relationship with the trigger value, whereby the prize instruction signal results in at least one game console issuing a prize.

No individual citation or obvious combination of citations discloses a trigger value derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution.

Claims 82-90

The invention of the amended claims is directed to a gaming system comprising at least one game console, a trigger value generator for generating a trigger value, a prize triggering means, and a controller which is adapted to periodically receive count data from one game console, being data representing at least one parameter of each game console, store count data for each game console in a different memory location, calculate a total value representing the total count data received by a receiver for each game console and compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value and operate the prize triggering means to transmit a prize instruction signal to the gaming console which has a total value having a predetermined relationship with the trigger value.

No individual citation or obvious combination of citations discloses storing count data for each game console in a different memory location so as to compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value.

The closest art for both groups of inventions of:

AU 200234395

discloses awarding a jackpot over a gaming network including a plurality of interlinked gaming machines comprising generating a trigger value, receiving count data from each gaming machine, calculating a total value representing the total count data received, comparing the total value with the trigger value, and outputting a prize instruction signal, but fails to disclose that the trigger value is derived from a random variable having a non-uniform distribution or that count data for each game console is stored in a different memory location so as to compare the total value for each game console with the trigger value.